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O proof need be given to establish the truth of the assertion, that the furniture and decoration of our houses require improvement, an improvement which becomes the more difficult, inasmuch as our children, brought up amidst vagaries of the vilest taste, are reconciled by habit to ugliness and incongruity. The evil thus perpetuates itself. It is impossible to deny that a movement in a right direction has been going on for some time; but in these matters we are so greatly dependent on others that little has been effected. We cannot select proper hangings or furniture, if there be only bad to choose from: the manufacturer cannot produce good designs if the public will buy only the bad. The third lecture delivered at Marlborough House, by Mr. Owen Jones, was devoted to an examination of this subject, and we will endeavour to give our readers the substance of the discourse, interspersing such objections or remarks as may occur to us. They will, therefore, consider that it is the lecturer who is speaking, excepting where otherwise pointed out. Nothing is more common, said he, with reference to the difficulty just now alluded to, than when you go to an upholsterer's, and ask to see a carpet or other article of furniture, for the upholsterer to say to his assistant, "Bring me down No. 90, Lord A.'s carpet;" and if you object that it does not appear to you to possess any especial recommendation for good taste, he will reply: "I assure you it is most fashionable. It is Lord A.'s own design, and we have laid it down at this part and that part; and only yesterday it was chosen by Lady Emily B." These arguments are generally conclusive with customers who may not have any decided opinion of their own; or, on the contrary, a very strong one, and end by choosing something considerably worse. So the original error of Lord A. is perpetuated, and gives birth to abortions still more monstrous; and the next time Lady Emily B. has to choose, she has to choose a little lower down the scale, which she has herself helped to make sliding.

Mr. Babbage suggests, in his "Bridgewater Treatise," that as every word we utter causes certain vibrations in the air, which can never stop, but are continued through all eternity, it might possibly be one of the torments of the wicked in that place which is said to be reserved for them hereafter, that their sense of hearing should be so sharpened, that all the wicked words they had ever uttered might be continually sounding in their ears. It would be useful if Lord A. and Lady B. and all who follow after them, would act in future as if some such fact were possible with regard to sight. We should be very glad if they would act as if they might be condemned hereafter to have a Great Exhibition of their own of all the works of their choice and their unhappy results. Let them at least remember, that the evil which men do lives after them. A man may do as much harm to society, by building a house in bad taste, decorating a shop with unsightly sign-boards, and filling its windows with productions vicious in form and colour, as by openly violating some at least of the laws which society has established for regulating the morals.

Children born in an age of ugliness like the present cannot hope to have their instincts quickened for the beautiful, but, on the contrary, the natural instinct will be extinguished, and will no longer be born with them.

We can each do much towards at least putting our own house in order. Reform should begin in your nurseries: all those hideous papers which decorate your nursery-walls, and those ungainly toys which serve to amuse your children, but educate them downwards, must at once be banished. The moral influences received in childhood are well known as the most lasting: many men through life have but little more of faith than the remnant of what they gained upon their mother's knees, which the friction of their school days and after-life may enfeeble, but can never thoroughly eradicate.

Instead of endless repetitions of views of the Crystal Palace, men and horses standing on each other's heads, steamers floating on each other's masts, all over your nursery walls, we will ask of you to take care that none but pure forms shall be permitted to enter within those walls where the rising generation (to whom the future destinies of this great country will one day be committed) are born and bred. And when your children descend to your drawing-room take care (if not for yourselves, at least for them), that the influence thus happily commenced may be continued; so that although you cannot control the evil influences of ungainly forms, which their daily walks in the streets may give, you may prepare for them a shield to guard them, and they may daily return to their own homes with a growing sense of beauty and refinement.

Let us here mention, in a parenthesis, without making the lecturer responsible for the statement, that we have found the children of the Sovereign at nine in the morning at the Museum of Practical Art; and on another occasion, at the same hour, amidst the Elgin marbles,—not the only wise hint to the mothers of England to be found in the highest place. Accustom your children to find beauty in goodness and goodness in beauty.

The lecturer then spoke of the paper stainer. The art has been very much neglected in this country, and, indeed, is but little better in France, at least, as exhibited in its productions which are imported into this country. They exhibit the same vicious principles which are to be found everywhere in those of our own manufacture, but are much more perfect in execution, so that we have a false principle under the most pleasing guise: we have vice under the mask of virtue, but only the more hideous on that account. He maintained that one of the first principles to be attended to in adorning the walls of an apartment is, that nothing should disturb their flatness; yet it is very difficult to find a paper that does not in some way violate this rule: they are either large masses of conventional foliage in high apparent relief, surrounding masses of unbroken colour, or representations of flowers, fruits, and ribbons, twisted into the most unwarrantable of positions. Nothing is more common than to find strawberries and cherries, or other equally impossible combinations, growing on the same stalk; and although great pains are taken to make the flowers and fruits as much like nature as the paper-stainer's art can make them, it only increases the inconsistency. Strawberries do not grow on walls, but on the ground; and although roses may be trained over walls, they are not endless representations of the same bunches, nor are they interlaced with satin ribbons.

All direct representations of natural objects in paper-hangings should be avoided; firstly, because it places these objects in unseemly positions; secondly, because it is customary in almost every apartment to suspend on the walls pictures, engravings, or other ornamental works, and therefore the paper should serve as a background, and nothing on it should be obtrusive or advancing to the eye.

Diaper patterns in self tints are safest for this purpose; but when varieties of colours are used, the Oriental rule of so interweaving the form and colour that they may present a neutralised bloom when viewed at a distance, should never be departed from.

The prevailing colours of the walls of rooms hung with printed paper should, of course, vary with the character of the room and the aspect. Halls and staircases look well hung with green, because the eye on entering a house is generally fatigued by the strong glare of daylight, and the green is the most refreshing. Studies and dining-rooms look well with dull reds in diapers or flocks, which may be enriched with gold: these form good back-grounds for engravings or pictures; but the reds or greens must never be positive colours, but low-toned and broken, so as not disagreeably to impinge upon the eye. In drawing-rooms, where the papers have to do more towards furnishing and beautifying a room, they may be more gay: almost any tone and shade of colour heightened with gold may be used, provided always that the colours are so arranged, and the forms so interwoven, that a perfect balance be obtained, and the eye never attracted to any one portion. Instead of floral-patterned papers for bed-rooms we should choose a paper of very low-toned secondaries or tertiaries, and on it we would suspend a fine engraving from the old masters, or other work of art, as perfect as our means would allow: this would enliven the room and furnish contemplation for the mind when feverish or restless.

In treating of the house painter, the lecturer showed himself tolerant in respect of imitations of woods and marbles, maintaining as a proposition *that they are allowable only when the employment of the thing imitated would not have been inconsistent.*

The upholsterers exercise more influence, both for good and evil, over the taste of the present day than any other persons. Unhappily the furnishing of our houses has been handed over to them by those whose duty it is to make this question their own. The architect has abandoned, to inferior and unguided hands that which was his especial province.

The first and most important rule in the selection of furniture is that it should be fit for the object to which it is applied: that which is appropriate in a mansion would be misplaced in a cottage.

The use in all cases should define the form. All ornamentation should grow out of and never interfere with the general form. There

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